

SASSA Migrates Beneficiaries to Postbank Black Cards

By Charity Ngalwa

05 April 2025

The South African Social Security Agency (SASSA), responsible for administering and paying social grants to eligible beneficiaries, is migrating to Postbank. The process, which started in September 2024, is finally nearing completion. Currently, there are different types of beneficiaries and grants. These include grants for elderly people, those living with disabilities, the Child Support Grant, grants for war veterans, the Care Dependency Grant, the Grant in Aid, and the Foster Care Grant.

The number of beneficiaries each month is around 28 million.

The now 7-month-long process aimed for social grant beneficiaries to change from the gold card to the Postbank black card, with the deadline originally set for 28 February 2025.

The reason for the migration was to enhance security against fraud, cloning, and system failure. The new card is expected to help avoid these problems.

Unfortunately, the migration process has not been without problems and challenges for beneficiaries, as they had to deal with long queues, slow service due to a few service agents per site. The system has constantly been offline on many sites, making it a struggle to access services, as there are very few sites available, which is costly to beneficiaries in terms of money and time.

Sibongile Manana, 38, a single mother from Orange Farm, says she has returned three times to the Eyethu Service Site due to the offline system after waiting for hours in the queue.

"I was made to stand in the queue even with a disability, as I'm blind," says Khosi Zulu from Lakeside in Evaton.

"I wake up at 4 am to walk from [home to] ensure I will get the black card as I don't want my grant to be cut," says Mam' Francis, who stays in Tshovitsho informal settlement and had to walk to Eyethu Mall in the dark which posed a danger for her.

Zoleka Faniso, 36, a Shoprite cashier based in Freedom Park, says she struggles to get time off from work to queue for the new card and hopes there will be an extension.

These challenges are not unique to these beneficiaries and the mentioned areas as there are areas such as Cape Town that have been flooded with challenges.

Fortunately, these challenges have not gone unnoticed by the SASSA and Postbank officials, as the cut-off for the gold cards has been postponed until the end of May 2025.

The CEO of Postbank, Ms. Nikki Mbengashe appealed to beneficiaries to take advantage of the two-month extension because after the deadline, they will not be able to access their grants

Briefing the media on 28 March in Pretoria, Ms. Mbengashe said, “After these two months we will not be providing alternatives for people to access their grants. We believe that we've stuck to the commitment to allow people to migrate to the black card. There's now an extension for the SASSA gold card. After these two months, there will be no alternative if you don't have your black card; you will not be able to access their grants your grant.”

With 1.3 million people still to migrate due to the offline systems failures, let us hope all beneficiaries will be efficiently and successfully migrated by the deadline